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SPIRITUALISM PAST AND PRESENT.—THOUGHTS
FOR THE NEW YEAR.

THERE is little actually new in the phenomenal phases of Modern Spiritualism. Manifestations of spiritual presence and communication with the world of departed humanity are as old as life and death, though still, like these, they are new to the experience of each successive generation. Apparitions and hauntings, Urim and Thummim, the divining cup, crystal and mirror, revelations in dream, trance and ecstasy, by voice, vision, writing, drawing; these and other forms of spirit-manifestation and communion were known, perhaps in some respects better known, to the ancient than to the modern world.

In China, spirit-writing by an instrument similar to the planchette, has been known for centuries. Ancient Greece and Rome had their oracles and sybils, as Judea had its prophets: they divined by stools and tables, and by a suspended ring striking against the alphabetic characters placed around the rim of a circular disc, and so spelling out responses. All this corresponds closely to some of the spirit-manifestations of our time. Even the rappings as a mode of spiritual communication are not altogether new. As a means of warning, our ancestors for generations have been familiar with them, and it has only been mortal obtuseness that foiled their efforts at fuller communication. Two centuries ago, in the disturbances which took place at the house of Mr. Mompesson, a Wiltshire magistrate, and which were made famous by the report of Glanvil, the King's chaplain, and a Fellow of the Royal Society, it was particularly noticed that the spirit making these disturbances would exactly answer in drumming anything that was beaten or called for. It would scratch or knock thrice, five, seven or ten times, stopping at any

number at request. It also moved a board backward and forward, and to and fro as requested, twenty times together. In 1716, at the house of John Wesley's father, Epworth Rectory, Lincolnshire, there were similar disturbances, Jeffrey, as the rapping spirit came to be called, would respond by knocks to questions and observations, and imitate particular sounds, repeating them any given number of times according to request. In the case of Mary Parsons, in 1756, the spirit answered questions by raps, one knock for the affirmative, two for the negative, and expressed displeasure by scratching. About half a century ago, in the ghostly disturbances which took place in a farm house at Sandford, near Tiverton, the *poltergeist* would give as many knocks as there were pieces of money placed on the table; and would answer questions, giving so many knocks for yes, and so many for no. It needed only one step further; but it was not till a quarter of a century ago that this step was taken, and the means of communication thus opened was systematically followed out. The first crude forms of spiritual telegraphy steadily and rapidly improved; and there has been a continuous development of new phases of spirit manifestation and intercourse, increasing in variety and interest to the present time.

We have during the past year especially directed attention to two of these forms of manifestation—the systematic appearance and audible converse of spirits at circles, and spirit-photographs. We have given more space to the latter in particular; as it is, so far as we know, altogether unique and peculiar to modern Spiritualism, and opens up a new and most inviting field of investigation.

But while Spiritualism in most of those forms of it with which we are now familiar has been known and witnessed for ages, it has perhaps never been so generally understood, or so systematically and scientifically investigated as now. It is no longer confined to isolated individuals exercising occult arts in privacy and fear; or to secret societies of persons initiated into these sacred mysteries; or to priesthoods, with their esoteric doctrines for the few and fables and superstitions for the vulgar. The knowledge of these things is not now limited to the chosen and elect, to philosophers and priests; the veil of artificial mystery has been rent from the top to the bottom. We need not however fear that sacred things will hereby be profaned, or that, surrounded as we are by Eternity and Infinity, all mystery will soon be for ever at an end. God has taken effectual means to protect his own mysteries. Those who are unfit to enter into them can never know them, though the open secret may lie all around as the blaze of sunlight may surround the blind at noon. Sense

and self; an untrusting mind; an unloving heart;—these may weave around the soul a closer and more impenetrative veil than ever shrouded the inner sanctuary—the Holy of Holies—in the temple at Jerusalem. The higher truths of the inner life can be known only to quick sympathy, and joyful obedience, to that strong faith, and deep trust, and abiding love, in which we realize the blended union and communion of spirit. But to all things there is a time and season. The nipping frosts and biting winds of scepticism are being followed by the genial breath of Spring. Winter is relaxing its cold hard embrace, and we feel the stirring of a new spiritual life. Now is the seed-time. The facts of Spiritualism are being sown broadcast. This is our work, and we need not be too anxious about what will come of it. Let us do our part, and we may trust a gracious Providence for the rest.

We note with satisfaction the steady advance Spiritualism is making from year to year. During the past year public opinion has been favourably and widely influenced by the *Report of the Committee of the Dialectical Society*. The Spiritual Institute has held *séances*, conferences, and meetings generally three or four times a week, and circulated spiritual literature to all parts of the world, and to a greater extent than ever before. Local societies have been particularly active. Much, too, has been done in what may be called home-missionary work. Among its more recent public lecturers and advocates we, in particular, note with pleasure Mr. Gerald Massey (the poet), and Dr. George Sexton (for many years one of the most efficient and popular secularist lecturers), but who, after long and careful investigation of Spiritualism, has satisfied himself of its truth, and now gives it his active support. Mr. J. J. Morse, as a trance-speaker, has, during the past year, given more than a hundred public lectures and addresses in London and the provinces, which have been well received and generally well attended; and Mr. William Wallace, as a "missionary medium," has also done good service. Mrs. Holmes (the American medium), who is now with us, has presented phenomena to many hundreds of persons in the Metropolis and in our large towns, which to physical science are utterly inexplicable. Miss Fowler, Miss Hudson, and Mrs. Olive, by their clairvoyance and tests of spirit-presence and identity, have brought home conviction to many earnest enquirers. The *Daily Telegraph* has made known to the public the appearance of spirit-faces at the circles of Miss Florence Cook. Messrs. Herne and Williams have carried their mediumship to the Hague, where their wonderful manifestations have been witnessed by *savans*, clergymen, and many persons of all classes of society, with deep

interest and to the great satisfaction of the society of Spiritualist who had invited them. Mr. Joseph Ashman has instituted in London a Psychopathic Institution for the cure of disease by magnetic agency and healing mediumship; and, we are informed has already met with considerable success; and many others who cannot be here enumerated, have in their several sphere of use been labouring diligently and with good effect for the advancement of Spiritualism.

Our articles and book notices show that valuable additions have been made to the standard literature of Spiritualism. In England Spiritualism is represented in journalism by three monthly magazines, a fortnightly newspaper, and a weekly journal. The spiritual journalism of the United States of America has received a valuable accession in the *Western Star*, a well-got-up monthly magazine, edited by Emma Hardinge; and we see that a "Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Science" is projected by Professor Brittan, one of the earliest advocates of Spiritualism in America, and we may add one of the ablest on either Continent. We learn that in Mexico a Spiritualist journal has been established which has excited the denunciations of the Roman Catholic Bishop and clergy, while its replies have called forth considerable sympathy from the liberal religious press. In South America *O Echo d'Além Tumulo* is published monthly at Bahia; and another monthly, *La Revista Espiritista*, is issued from Montevideo. Australia is alive with Spiritualism, which is represented in the press by the *Harbinger of Light*, published monthly at Melbourne. On the Continent of Europe, we know of the following journals devoted to Spiritualism:—

<i>La Revue Spirite</i> : Monthly—Paris.	<i>El Progreso Espiritista</i> : Zaragoza.
<i>La Salute</i> : Weekly—Paris.	<i>El Espiritismo</i> : Semi-Monthly—
<i>Le Spiritisme</i> : Semi-Monthly—Lyons.	Sevilla
<i>Le Messager</i> : Monthly—Liège.	<i>Revista Espiritista</i> : Monthly—
<i>Le Phare</i> : Semi-Monthly—Liège.	Barcelona.
<i>Le Magnetiseur</i> : Monthly—Geneva.	<i>El Criterio Espiritista</i> : Monthly—
<i>Licht des Jenseits</i> : Monthly—Vienna.	Madrid.
<i>Swiatlo Zagrobowe</i> : Monthly—	<i>La Revelacion</i> : Monthly—Alicante.
Lemberg.	<i>Annali Dello Spiritismo in Italia</i> :
<i>Die Spiritisch Rational tische, Zeit-</i>	Monthly—Torino.
<i>schrift</i> : Monthly—Leipzig.	<i>L' Aurora</i> : Semi-Monthly—Florence.

Our brief survey, however imperfect, may serve to indicate the present *status* of Spiritualism, and the progress it has made in a quarter of a century. It is fast belting round and permeating our human world like an all-embracing, all-pervading atmosphere; and still "the work goes bravely on." May God speed it!

MANIFESTATIONS IN AUSTRALIA.

Mr. W. H. TERRY, in a letter, dated *Melbourne, Victoria*, September 6th, 1872, writes as follows:—

“ We have had a series of startling physical manifestations here, and as most of them took place under test conditions, and in the presence of sceptics, they furnish strong corroborative evidence of the power of spirits to convey ponderable objects into a closed room.

“ The reported occurrence of wonderful physical phenomena at the house of Mr. J. P——n, at Castlemaine, caused that gentleman to be applied to by many anxious to witness them, and amongst others, three well-known individuals—one being the sheriff of the county, another a government official holding a responsible office, and the third a merchant of repute—acknowledged by our opponents to be men of undoubted intelligence, and more than ordinary shrewdness. Mr. J. P. agreed to give them an opportunity if they would affirm to what they witnessed, and sign a document if necessary. This being agreed to, the three gentlemen, two of them being accompanied by their wives, and the other by a Chinese, who, with the exception of Mr. P. (and Mrs. P., the medium), formed the whole company. Before commencing, Mr. P. requested his guests to examine carefully the room, and take whatever precautions they thought proper. This they accordingly did, both inside and out. They then fastened the door, and put a seal upon it, nailed up the window with four nails, also the fireplace, leaving no aperture of any kind. The light was turned down low, and in a short time something fell heavily on the table, which, on examination, proved to be a hot brick, from the fireplace in the adjoining room. This was followed by a flower-pot with plant, then an album, which, on a light being struck, was seen by all to be turned over leaf by leaf, and stop at the portrait of a person whose name had been incidentally mentioned. Two other sittings were held by the same persons, when several heavy objects were brought, including a large iron barrow-wheel, a fore-quarter of bacon, a bottle of wine, &c., the two last mentioned items being seen in transit in the light, the bottle of wine being first laid on the table, and then stood up on its bottom while all were looking at it.

“ During and after the *séance* the doors and windows were examined, and the fastenings found undisturbed. The leading local paper, which has hitherto persistently ridiculed the manifestations and discredited the evidence in regard to them, is quite taken aback. The three gentlemen alluded to each sent an account of

their experiences to it, and these were fully commented upon in two leading articles, in which the editor admits the necessity for scientific investigation, and recommends some of our university men to take the matter in hand. The only consolation the writer has is, that the witnesses were not Spiritualists, and there was no invocation used, hence there is no evidence that the manifestations were produced by spirits! The *Melbourne Daily Telegraph*, commenting upon the foregoing, suggested that two detectives were sent up, there was no doubt they would be able to discover how it was done. Mr. J. P. thereupon sent a document to the office of the *Mount Alexander Mail*, accepting the *Telegraph's* suggestion, requesting them to select their detectives, and offering to deposit fifty pounds in the hands of the editor of the *Mount Alexander Mail*, which was to be given to the local charities in the event of any trickery being discovered; on the other hand, he stipulated that the editor of the *Telegraph* should deposit a like amount, to be applied to a similar purpose in the event of the detectives being unable to discover any fraud. This floored the *Telegraph*, and they backed out of it. There are also some interesting manifestations occurring at Sandhurst, some of which are recorded in the *Harbinger of Light* for August and September, which also contains a full account of the opening of the Stowell Spiritual Lyceum. Mr. J. Tyerman has just completed a series of four lectures on Spiritualism and kindred subjects, at St. George's Hall, Melbourne, which have been attended by large and appreciative audiences. The hall holds about 700 people, and on the last occasion was not only full in every part, but at least 100 were unable to obtain admission, yet not one of the papers have reported or even noticed the lectures."

From the *Mount Alexander Mail* we learn that the iron wheel introduced into the closed *séance* room was found to weigh sixteen and a half pounds; when placed on the operating table, "the noise did not suggest the fall from any considerable height, it seemed rather to be the result of the article being placed on the table by a strong hand: the table was not much indented." The wheel had been last seen lying in the yard at a distance of not less than fifty feet from the room where the *séance* was held. This wheel had found its way into the room by the same agency on a former occasion, along with a family Bible, a ten-gallon cask, and some other things.

The editor concludes a leading article on the subject as follows:—

The whole thing was investigated from a rationalistic point of view, and all that is asked for is a rationalistic explanation. Of course the first impulse is to say that the only explanation which human reason can accept is to put it down to trickery. We have no experience of the laws which govern the transit of

solid bodies being violated, but we have ample experience of persons of 'cute intelligence being deceived by clever conjuring. Therefore it is more reasonable to believe that R. C. and J. S. and C. P. H. were victims of a clever delusion than it would be to believe that a barrow-wheel can come through a solid wall without the requisite driving force. But to this objection there is, necessarily, the counter-argument—what do we know of matter, or of the laws of matter? Or, rather, how do we know that there is nothing new to be discovered about those laws? There was a time when the power of the magnet was unknown; and even now who can say what that power is? It is quite conceivable that a savage might look upon it as a trick, yet every child is satisfied that it is not. What is matter, and *what proof is there that matter exists outside of our own consciousness?* Absolutely none. There can be absolutely none. And if the domain of consciousness can be enlarged, if new states of consciousness can be produced by the attitude usually observed at these *séances*, who is to say that to the operators these manifestations are not as real and as genuine as any of the ordinary phenomena occurring about us are to ordinary observers, that is to say, to observers having their consciousness in its ordinary state. But the subject is too complex for an article of this kind, nor do we make the slightest pretence to offer a rationalistic explanation of the mystery, supposing that it is not a trick. For our own part, it would be mere affectation to say that we believe in the actual occurrence of the phenomena that our correspondents attest. We do not for one moment doubt their testimony, be it observed, but to say that we have an intellectual conviction of the truth, or rather of the reality of the occurrences, would be to class ourselves with the ordinary herd that, as Montaigne says, "believe that they believe, not knowing what it is to believe."

The manifestations which are related by them, are only a few examples of similar manifestations which are testified to by competent witnesses in all parts of the civilised world. Indeed, the weight of testimony which they have received is quite equal to that upon which religions have been founded before now. For that matter Christianity itself is not so favourably situated to meet the sceptic as Spiritualism. For the so-called Spiritualistic miracles have been wrought in a scientific age, have been examined by scientific men, and are believed in and attested to by witnesses of every degree of intelligence, in numbers far in excess of those commanded by Christianity at a corresponding period of its publication. And some of these alleged wonders are very similar in character, too, to the Christian miracles; that is to say, if the Christian miracles are true, the Spiritualist has a claim to say that his miracles may be true also. But it is sufficient to observe in the present case that none of those who took part at the Castlemaine *séances* are Spiritualists, or attribute the phenomena to spirits.

THE PHYSICS OF PRAYER.*

By R. M. THEOBALD, M.D.

SINCE the first appearance of Professor Tyndall's letter and communication on the "Efficacy of Prayer," the question has been largely discussed in both the daily and weekly journals, especially the *Spectator*. We cannot say that the solution of all the difficulties suggested has been much advanced. Perhaps this is because, logically regarded, they are insoluble. They belong to the great primary puzzles that arise out of the

* *Contemporary Review*, October, 1872. Articles by Professor TYNDALL and others.

parallel lines of truth involved in the idea of a personal God, fixed laws, moral government, free will, and man as at once a natural and a supernatural being. In discussing these questions, the physicists take account only of fixed laws and sequences in Nature. All the fine, transcendental realm of facts which belong to the moral and spiritual side of man's life—his sense of causation; the ineradicable instinct that leads him to assert for himself a place outside the strict chain of natural sequences; the illogical yet unconquerable anthropomorphism which assures him that he has a Father in heaven, whose relation to him must find some other modes of expression than can be accounted for by the unmoral and passionless Laws of Nature—all these experiences are ignored by the mere physicist. Professor Tyndall and his friend of the Athenæum Club have again spoken in the pages of this month's *Contemporary* "On Prayer." The learned Professor becomes more oracular than ever in his last deliverance. He tells us that we belong to the same class as those who in the fourth century deemed the belief in Antipodes unscriptural and heretical; or those who in the seventeenth century condemned Galileo for teaching that the earth revolves round the sun; or those who found heresy in the early revelations of geology; or those whose pious cosmogony shrieked with agonised horror when Darwin published his *Origin of Species*. We are accustomed to be lectured in this supercilious style by *petit-maitre* dogmatists who think they have themselves passed out of reach of all human frailty or mistake. It is evident that the subject under consideration has not arrived at such a fixed conclusion as to justify such a tone as this from the spokesman of a small minority even among men of culture and thought. There are other expressions in Professor Tyndall's paper equally wanting in good taste and modesty. It is extremely likely—we may say certain—that some of our notions will be generally looked upon at some future period as untenable and unscientific; but we are perfectly sure that none of the wise teachers of old, who helped to clear the intellectual atmosphere around them of fallacies and mistakes, thought their aim would be furthered by invidious comparisons between the beliefs of to-day and the beliefs of past ages.

Professor Tyndall's object in this paper is to bring the question which has been so largely debated to a more definite shape. He does not profess to undervalue prayer when it is rightly directed. He only disputes the physical value of prayer—he denies its claim to be looked upon as "a form of physical energy, or the equivalent of such energy." "Physical nature is not its legitimate domain." If prayer has any power of the kind claimed, it must submit to the usual methods of verification,

namely, observation and experiment, employed by scientific men. We presume no one ever claimed that prayer is a physical agent, or a form of physical energy, in the sense in which such phrases are ordinarily used. The attempt to reduce the question to such terms as these is a mere sophism. The true question is whether physical changes of any kind can be connected with prayer, not in the ordinary scientific way of cause and effect, but by that sort of spiritual relation which the spirit of a man can discern between things outside him and the development of his inner life. And if this relation is recognised, can we know that God modifies events so as to address us and educate us, and that prayer thus finds its response and reward? To say that physical nature is not the domain of prayer, if the words mean anything more than a barren truism which no one would dream of denying, is to assert that innumerable facts and events which have an incalculable influence on man's spiritual life are not to enter into his prayers at all—or not in the way of petition.

Shallow, however, as this limitation of the inquiry really is, it comes with a certain air of plausibility when we are told that prayer for any result that can be expressed in the terms of physical science is useless. It is true that no one would pray that the climate or seasons might be changed, or any of the laws of nature reversed, and it might appear that such issues are involved when we pray for recovery from sickness, or for any kind of external good. But it is sufficient to answer that, wherever man's doings can be a factor in the causation of any end sought by prayer, a supernatural element is already at work; the fixed laws of nature with their inexorable mathematics are subjected to disturbing influences, and we have every right to assume that such perturbations may be used so as to bring about physical changes such as the physical philosopher is apt to claim as outside the domain of prayer altogether. It may be true, as the Athenæum Club writer observes, that as physical science advances many objects cease to be prayed for which were formerly thought proper for prayer. We do not think the illustrations which he gives, such as hydrophobia, are quite satisfactory; but we quite object to his claim that the line of demarcation, as defined by advancing science, should be drawn, or that we should anticipate future scientific developments and sophisticate our prayers accordingly. All these are matters for individual determination. If prayer is spiritual, it may be illogical and unscientific to any extent without harm, and it is vain to antedate our knowledge and put a bridle on the praying tongue in order to disarm a scientific critic, and force a consistency between our conceptions of natural law and aspirations which soar altogether above nature. It is not true then that

"what a man will pray for depends precisely on the extent his intelligent acquaintance with the phenomena around and within him." We can quite conceive of a devout physical philosopher praying for many things which a less devout physical philosopher, equally well informed, or even a physical philosopher whose devoutness was cast in a different mould, would exclude from his prayers. We do not suppose that Faraday's prayers would have pleased Professor Tyndall or his Athenæum friend; nor that Faraday himself could have answered the scientific objections they would have brought against them.

The fact is these philosophers are perpetually assuming that they know what in reality they only half know. There is a dark sphere that surrounds all our knowledge, even in physical science, and it is in this dark region that the soul of man comes in contact with the spiritual laws and powers that are the basis of all natural events. In this dark region the spirit of prayer finds its home and its opportunity—here it lives and moves, and has its being. After all allowance is made for events which physical science may be allowed to point to as determined by inexorable physical laws—facts which rest on the plane of mere nature—there are plenty of physical events entering into human experience which belong to the mixed natural and supernatural system of causation which constitutes human history. To this class belong nearly all those things which have been referred to by the Athenæum Club critic and Mr. Galton as unsuitable subjects for prayer—matters connected with life, health, worldly prosperity, bodily and mental soundness, character, family, social, national, and universal human welfare. It is perfectly absurd for any physical philosopher to pretend to know all the causes, or even the quality and origin of the causes, that enter into these phenomena. For aught that Professor Tyndall or Mr. Galton knows there may be regions in which invisible and supernatural agents are continually operating—touching hidden springs of influence which we know nothing of—making use of natural laws in such a way as not to betray their own presence and yet to modify events just as effectually as if a miracle were wrought, according to the most vulgar and startling conception of that much misunderstood word. This is just as conceivable and just as rational a theory of the universe as the fixed-fate and-blind-law theory which is so fascinating to the physicist.

This speculation is valid even if human experience is looked at from the lowest and most common-place point of view. But when the facts of Spiritualism are allowed to lend their light to interpretation on the hidden origin and meaning of human events this speculation rises out of the region of mere conjecture—the surmise is seen to be a proved fact. It is now as well ascertained

as any fact in chemistry and electricity, that spirits who have left the earth visibly still retain some power of acting upon us who are left, and of influencing our internal and external life in various ways, and it is sheer affectation to ignore these facts as if they had no claim to be considered when we are constructing a philosophy of life, and discussing such a question as the efficacy of prayer. And like all real knowledge, the facts of Spiritualism, while they enlarge the scope of our perception, also deepen the sacred sphere of darkness which surrounds all that we know. If we look at events as merely the product of natural laws we may perhaps flatter ourselves—as so many physicists seem to do—that we know all about them, and are competent to dogmatise about them. But if we find that a thread of Supernaturalism runs through all our experience, dogmatism is hushed, and prayer rises spontaneously in the heart and gives utterance by the mouth. The mere physicist is so conscious of his knowledge that the scope of his prayer dwindles to a vanishing point. On the other hand, the most enlightened man may be so conscious of his ignorance that he dares not put any limitation whatever upon the objects which may be fitly introduced into his prayers.

We know perfectly well what is the conclusion to which we are being conducted by these physical philosophers. They begin by making our prayers, as they profess, more rational—more accordant with our advanced knowledge of natural law and physical science. They will end by abolishing them altogether, as their reign of law becomes more autocratic and comprehensive. The tendency of modern science is to bring all events under the conception of fixed law. The science of statistics aims at finding a numerical expression for every conceivable human action, and would tabulate the percentage of kisses in the population if it could only register a sufficient number of instances. Thus, a statistical philosopher might find very good grounds for objecting to prayer for anything affecting character or conduct. Indeed, our Athenæum Club monitor seems somewhat of this character, and appears to regard prayer which utters any petition at all as objectionable. He professes to “show what prayer may be according to the views of a physicist,” and, if we understand him rightly, he would exclude petition altogether, and never ask for any blessing whatever. He can only find in prayer an exercise of communion, submission and prostration before the Unseen. We should like to see a formula of devotions drawn up according to this conception. Perhaps the Athenæum Club writer will allow our shorthand reporter to take down one or two of his own prayers for the benefit of those who wish to pray with perfect scientific

propriety. When he has thus supplied models for men culture, he may perhaps draw up a manual of scientific prayer for peasants and working men, and women and children. I can only say that we never heard or read any prayers of this type, and we are perfectly sure that if prayer is to be truly eviscerated, there will not be a pulse of warm life left in it.

A third paper is added to these two by Professor Tyndall and the prophet of the Athenæum, by Dr. M'Cosh—a wise and thoughtful vindication of the belief in prayer which physical science is supposed to undermine. We cannot close our observations more appropriately than by quoting some of Dr. M'Cosh's concluding words. Referring to the proposed hospital experiment, he says:—

The proposal made in the letter forwarded by Professor Tyndall is evidently regarded as likely to be troublesome to religious men. If they accept, it is expected that the issue of the attempt will cover them with confusion. If they decline, they will be charged with refusing to submit to a scientific test. It may turn out, however, that all that the letter proves is an utter ignorance on the part of certain scientific writers of the kind of evidence by which moral and religious truths are sustained. I believe that the time has come when the intelligent public must intimate pretty decisively that those who have excelled in physical experiments are not therefore fitted to discuss philosophical and religious questions.

Exactly so! The study of bottles and lenses and chemical forces is a noble and useful pursuit, but it may leave the student as much a slave to the superstitions of science, which are the obverse of the superstitions of ignorance, as any benighted being who worships a fetish or hugs a charm.

ERRORS OF ANCIENTS AND MODERNS.

By WILLIAM HOWITT.

IN the charming gardens of the Pincio at Rome, the Italian children, escaped from the incubus of the Papacy, are making great improvements, as they are throughout the whole of Rome. A new life has broken forth from the ribs of that ancient dead Rome, "the Niobe of Nations," has started at once from a long and deadly and death-diffusing dream, to find that so far from all her children being slain by the Apollo, or rather the Apollyon of intellectual slavery, she never had so numerous or active a family about her. Everywhere building, enlarging, repairing are going on. A whole new city is fast rising. Thousands and thousands of workmen crowd the streets to repletion as they pass to the labour in a morning or their homes in an evening. New shops, new inns are opened and opening on all sides, and yet there

not room enough for the crowds of travellers and would-be inhabitants that flock into it. Building land which was bought in the last days of the Pope's reign for 33 centessimi, or less than threepence-halfpenny a square meter, is now re-sold for 48 lire, or nearly £2, per square meter, on an average; and front lots for 100 lire, or £4. Not only the city of the living is now thus springing into a wonderful juvenescence, but the city of the dead, the old Forum, the palace of the Cæsars, and other localities of 1,800 and 2,000 years ago, are being vigorously explored, and are giving up to the light the works of the great actors of long ago. All is life, movement, progress, and operation. The people themselves are as sanguinely alive to their political interests as to their material ones, and are holding monster meetings to demand an extension of their rights. The priests who have been living like bats in a wintry barn, hardly knowing whether their drowsy heads or sable heels were uppermost, whatever else they may think of it, must see that they are rubbing shoulders with a wide-awake generation, whose doings must bring facts to their memories that they would like to forget. For instance, in the alleys of the Pincio, the Government has been making a liberal addition to the busts of notabilities there, and the very first which greets the clerical eyes on entering are those of Arnaldo di Brescia and Savanarolo, whom their infallible Popes burnt alive. Then came Daniel Manin, who did no little towards the unification of Italy, and consequently to the destruction of the papal power; Rienzi, the embodiment of Italian freedom; Silvio Pellico, Ugo Foscolo, Gioberti, Machiavelli, and numbers of others who were not fish for the net of St. Peter, and amongst them Giacomo Leopardi, count, poet, philosopher and reformer.

Before this remarkable bust I make a pause. With head depressed and sunk into his bosom, you see at once that Nature had wreaked her worst spite upon his person in making him what the Italians call "gobbo," or hunch-backed. In other respects she seemed to have endeavoured to render this grand despite tolerable. She had given him remarkably well cut and intellectual features, a finely developed head and ample forehead with a profusion of curling hair. But still his face tells a tale of pain and sorrow, and says plainly enough that the favours of Nature had been far from balancing her malevolence. Such appears the marble representative of Leopardi, the greatest modern poet of Italy, a man of rank, who in solitude, poverty and suffering, with a sense of his inner greatness combating his consciousness of outward deformity, in the short life of thirty-nine years, acquired a knowledge of classical literature perhaps unequalled by any other man of the age, and poured in the

form of fervid and masculine poetry a libation of impassioned homage on the altar of his long suffering country, which he gathered like celestial fire in his veins, and spurred him triumphantly towards victory and unity—the grand recompense for her woes and sacerdotal indignities of a thousand years. Besides his poems and translations, Leopardi has left a considerable amount of prose in criticism, and philosophical dissertations. The volume which I am now about to mention, and draw some useful deductions from, is called *An Essay on the Popular Errors of the Ancients*.

Though Leopardi does not inculcate it as a fact that the errors called popular were not originated by the people but by the learned, yet the facts themselves that he adduces teach. The poets played the chief part in introducing and popularizing the errors, many of which have travelled down from the earliest times even to ours unscathed by all the lights and criticisms of the advancing ages. The historian corroborated many of them, and even the philosophers gave them their sanction. Taught by the people by such authorities, they naturally adopted and put full faith in them; and when by time they were hardened with prejudices, the learned were the first to defend them, and to attack furiously and ban as heretics, dreamers and impostors any who brought in sun-light, just as the learned and philosophical do now to the Spiritualists.

It is a curious fact that the bulk of the superstitions of mankind were not, as is usually taught, the offspring of ignorance and stupidity, but of learning and science, basely and selfishly misapplied. This was notoriously the case as it regarded idolatry. Egypt took the credit of hiding away the one omnipotent and omnipresent God under his own attributes, and raising every power of nature into a deity. The Egyptians not only deified the bull, the crocodile and the beetle, but their leeks and onion and as Lucian says, sowed their own gods and then ate them. Diffused from priest-besotted Egypt through Syria, Asia Minor and Greece, if not through India, the spirit of idolatry took root, and the Greek poets, particularly Orpheus, Hesiod and Homer, mounted and established a host of gods and goddesses out of everything in nature, and invested them with all the worst passions of man, and supplied them with histories charged with every species of villany and obscenity that the vilest of mankind are capable of.

The people did not create these mythological and scampish divinities; they had not the wit, the invention, or suggestive leisure. The authors of these were the priests, always ingenious in the construction of profitable systems, the poets and philosophers. These, most or all of them, knew the truth; knew o

the true and indivisible God as their writings amply testify, but they inoculated the people, in order to imbrute them, with the false and degrading worship of their creation. From this source has descended all the idolatries of popery, the deification of the Virgin, and the adoration of whole tribes of saints which the priests still demurely cultivate amongst the people, many or most of them knowing better themselves.

Oracles, magic and the prophetic nature of dreams, Leopardi treats as the sheer result of superstition, encouraged by priests and necromancers for their own ends. No doubt there has been plenty of that, but the strength of those practices lay in a substratum of truth, at which Leopardi forty years ago had not arrived, but which the development, or rather restoration of magnetic and spiritual science since then has amply demonstrated. As to the power of magic, both the Old and New Testament, especially the history of Moses in Egypt, and of the Apostles who came in contact with Simon Magus and Elymas the sorcerer, have sufficient testimony, and the number of magical books which were brought in at Ephesus, and burnt by the new converts to Christianity publicly, amounting in value to fifty thousand pieces of silver, show how extended was the practice of what is called in the Acts, "these curious arts."

That the oracles were not all priestly humbug, the answers given by them on many occasions as preserved to us by the historians, are proof enough. They are too curious and correct to be mere lucky guesses; and Plutarch and other classical authorities come to this conclusion. That the spirit of Python or Apollo, as the Greeks termed it, was a real vaticinating spirit, the New Testament again gives a plain example in the young woman who followed Paul and Silas about at Philippi; and whom Luke declares had this spirit of divination, and by it brought much gain to her masters.

Mrs. Gray, the author of two volumes of Roman history for the young—the *History of the Republic* and the *History of the Emperors*—books written in a more rational, sensible and Christian spirit than any history of the Romans that ever came to my knowledge, says candidly that the oracles undoubtedly often predicted events, but how they obtained the knowledge of them will probably never be known. If Mrs. Gray had made herself acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, she would guess pretty well whence this prescience came.

But whatever were the errors mixed up with oracles and magic, they were not popular but learned errors. They were the great, the wealthy, the rulers and leaders of states and armies who were the great consulters and supporters of oracles; and the mysteries of magic required more knowledge and leisure

than the people possessed. The faith in both these things was engrafted on the people by the profession of science and philosophy, the directors of education and creators of public opinion. The people followed the dictation of these classes as sheep follow Eastern and Continental shepherds; they did not originate such errors, they were the simple victims and heritors of them.

As for dreams, the Scriptures, Old and New, abound in attestations and examples of their prophetic character, as well as profane history in every nation; and the annals of Spiritualism come in support of that belief. But here again the faith in dreams, as taught in both scriptural and secular history, is based on the experience of the leaders of mankind, and not on that of the mass of the people.

One of the most extraordinary of human superstitions is that connected with sneezing. Every nation and age has connected an idea of spiritual influence with sneezing. The ancient Greeks regarded it as a sign that a deity was acting on the head—the seat of thought. They would have considered the child sneezing three times, as it returned to life under the hands of the Great Prophet of Israel, a direct proof of it; and when people sneezed whilst about to undertake some great enterprise, it was regarded as a good sign, and the persons present congratulated them. The practice is existent at the present day in most countries of the Continent. The moment you sneeze, the German says, *Gesundhiet!* and the Italian, *Salutè!* The classics are full of instances of this practice. Jove sneezed in the council of the gods, as a propitious sign; Penelope gave it as a proof to her that the voyage of her son Telemachus in search of his father would be prosperous, because while she spoke to him about it, he repeatedly sneezed. Propertius and Theocritus make the Loves sneeze propitiously regarding their devotees; Menelaus sneezed on reaching Sparta, on his return from Troy, according to Theocritus, which was a lucky sign. The learned were rejoiced when the oil in their lamps sputtered, which was called sneezing.

By most of the ancients a sneeze to the right of you was propitious; one to the left, an ill omen, though Catullus considered sneezing on one side auspicious. Eustathius relates from Plutarch that the genius of Socrates dictated to him by sneezes, and that if there was a sneeze to the right of him, or before him, he proceeded with any project in his mind; but if this occurred on the left, he abandoned it. Numbers of instances occurred in which the Greek generals went into battle, or avoided it, from some one near them to the right or left happening to sneeze. A sneeze, says Plutarch, determined Themistocles to give battle at Salamis, but caused him to

sacrifice three captive young princes to Bacchus, because whilst at the altar there had been given the fortunate omen of sneezing on the right. Hippias, the son of Pisistratus, on the other hand, happening to sneeze violently whilst arranging his troops in the enemy's country, gave up the enterprise. Probably he sneezed in the wind, for this they considered unlucky, as was also attributed to sneeze near a tomb. Frontinus tells us that when Timotheus, the Athenian general, was about to engage his fleet with that of the Corcyreans, his pilot heard one of the rowers sneeze on the left, and immediately put about the helm to return to port, when Timotheus asked him if it were not a wonder that out of so many thousand men the nose of one should tickle him? This, adds Polyænus, caused a laugh, and the pilot took courage and went on.

The Christian Fathers had much trouble in rooting out this superstition from amongst their pagan converts, and they never could have done it completely, as we find it still so widely existing. It is curious that, according to Festus, the word *consternation* comes from the fear excited amongst the Romans by inauspicious sneezing,—con-sternuto, or con-sternatio.

The Orientals took the same idea, and according to the Indian word *Sad-der*, it was believed that God had endowed the human body with a certain fire, which expressing itself in a sneeze, drove away the devil. This so-called popular error, we find, like all the rest, originated with, and was promulgated by the philosophers, priests, and commanders of the ancients. Aristotle, the great master of logic, metaphysics, and philosophy to the world for so many ages, in fact down to the appearance of Bacon, in his Problems, sect. 33, quæst. 6, calls sneezing the operation of a god and divine, worthy of every sentiment of reverence and veneration, and to have had temples erected to this divinity of the nose.

All the weird and mysterious beings with which the Greek mythology peopled the solitudes of the country were equally the creation of poets, priests and knowing philosophers, not at all the imaginations of the masses. Pan, Silenus, Fauns, Satyrs, Dryads, Nereides, Orcads, Nymphs of sea and land; all those phantasmal shapes which made night, and deserted dwellings, and tombs fearful, as Gorgons, black Lemures, Lares, Incubi, and Succubi, Lamias, which sucked the blood of infants in their sleep; Striges, nocturnal birds that gave poisonous milk to sucking babes, or, according to others, frightened them by their horrible aspect;—all these now-called popular superstitions were not the produce of the people, but of the poets and other writers, who filled the people's heads with them, as well as with Cyclops, Centaurs, Arimaspes, Dogheads, Mormolicæ, Pompilii, and other

monsters, for which we have no name, and which have never propagated themselves amongst modern nations, any more than the Sphinxes of Greece and Egypt. For the authors of these grotesque fabuloseities you must look, not amongst the plebs, but amongst no less celebrities than Plato, Homer, Diodorus Siculus, Apuleius, Theocritus, Moschus, Bion, Tibullus, Athenæus, Strabo; and amongst the Romans, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Lucretius, Propertius, Martial, Pomponius Mela, &c. From these great writers and teachers have descended many of the terrors of our country people, bogards, hobthrushes, brownies, kelpies, fairies, brown-man of the moors, and the like.

Nor must the finest of the Hebrew prophets stand wholly exempt from their share in realizing this race of phantasmal existences. Isaiah, in his 13th chapter, talks of "doleful creatures" haunting the lonely ruins of Babylon, and satyrs dancing there in company with dragons. And again in his 34th chapter, he prophesies that one day, in the ruins of Jerusalem, the satyrs also shall cry to their fellows, and the dragons shall have a home, and the great screech-owl, the Stryx of the Greeks, the milk poisoner of infants, and her daughters shall find their place of retreat. All these troubles do the great literary and spiritual teachers of mankind procreate in the imaginations of the unlettered millions, and then forsooth, they are popular errors!

But still more extraordinary were the ideas promulgated by the early Greek philosophers and astronomers regarding the sun, moon and stars. All these they declared were living fiery animals that suffered hunger and thirst, and must have food and drink, and for these they depended on this little unfortunate earth. The sun subsisted on the sea-water, which, hot from his daily race through the sky, he swallowed voraciously as he plunged down into the western ocean at night. According to Anacreon,—

The thirsty Earth drinks up the rain;
The Trees Earth's rosy goblet drain;
The Ocean revels every day;
The laughing Sun drinks up the Sea,
And when his mirthful course is run,
The Moon enraptured, drinks the Sun.

The sun had the more imperious necessity for this diurnal dose of salt water, because he had to feed from its stream the moon and all the stars, who were ravenously impatient of their regular supper of vapour.*

* Milton has concentrated these ancient poetical ideas as follows, placing them in the lips of the Archangel Raphael:—

"Of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,

Absurd as this statement appears, it was the fixed and sacred faith of the stoics, and woe to the new lights who dared to call the established philosophic creed in question. As Horace jeeringly asked about the nocturnal and other bug-bears of the philosophers,—

Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas,
Nocturnos lemures, portentaque Thessala rides?

Lucretius, on the other hand, gravely asserts of the sun,—

Ignes sive ipsi serpere possunt
Quo cujusque cibus vocat, atque invitat euntes,
Flammea per coelum pascentes corpora passim.

Speaking of the stoics "They hold" says Diogenes Laertius, "that these fiery bodies, and like these the stars themselves, are nourished by the aliments which the sun draws from our immense sea, since he is a fire endowed with intelligence, and the moon is fed also by the water which she can drink, being united to our atmosphere, and near to the earth, and all the stars by the vapours that the sun draws from the earth."

Plutarch, Clemens Alexandrinus, Stobocus, Crisippus the Stoic, and Porphyrius, all assert the same thing of the Stoics. This latter authority says:—"The Stoics teach that the sun is a mass of intelligent matter fed from the sea, whilst the moon exists on the waters of rivers and fountains, and the stars from the exhalations of the earth. That they are, in a manner, formed respectively from the sea, the rivers, and the earth." Seneca, in his *Natural Quæst.* lib. vi., cap. 16, expressly approves of this doctrine, being an out-and-out Stoic. Hippocrates, the physician, was of the same opinion, because, he said, Anacreon declared it was universally believed in his time. Aristotle differed from them, but Cleanthes, according to Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, lib. iii., asserted that the sun dared not pass the tropics for fear he should want food when so far from the ocean. Pliny was inclined to this theory of the Stoics; and, what is more extraordinary, many of the Christian Fathers were positive about it. Of this number were St. Ambrogius, St. Isidorus, Marius Victor; and even our venerable Bede, *De Natura Rerum*, cap. 19, says that water is believed to serve as aliment to the sun, though he does not say that he believed it.

Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest first, the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, imping'd
Vapours not yet into her substance turned.
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs:
The sun that light imparts to all receives
From all his alimental recompense
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the ocean."—"Paradise Lost," Book v., line 414.

Clemens Alexandrinus believed the stars were spiritual bodies, and had joint administration with the angels appointed to govern the world. Here we have the origin of astrology. But of all the Christian Fathers, none contended so zealously for these opinions as Origen. He asserted in his *De Princip.* lib. i., that the stars were living and reasoning things, whose souls were created before these their bodies, which they will one day quit, as we shall ours, and then there will be no more stars to illumine the world. In his second book he repeats this, and adds that they entered their bodies unwillingly. That the sun has free will, and with moon and stars praises the Lord, as the Psalmist recommended them, "Praise the Lord, sun and moon and stars and all lights." And in this belief not only Philo the Jew, but the more modern rabbis, Maimonides and Solomon agree with him. No doubt the Fathers took literally the fine passage of Scripture that at the creation of the earth the morning stars sang together, and all the hosts of heaven shouted for joy. Rargh Abulensis rather posed Solomon by remarking that as none of these bodies had mouths, larynx, or lungs, it was impossible they could sing. Origen, however, went further in his zeal, and believed the sun could actually run, for the Psalmist said that "he rejoiced like a strong man about to run a race;" and that he had consciousness, for "he knows the time of his going down."

Who could resist such reasoning? Yet there was a daring fellow who did it—one, Colot; and this, too, before Origen was born; but Plutarch (the admirable biographer) fell upon him tooth and nail. "Who denies," he asks, "that which has always been believed? Who refuses to submit to evidence? Those only who reject divination; who deny the direct providence of God; who declare the sun, the moon, and the stars to be inanimate things: though to them all men offer sacrifices, pay their vows, and give adoration."

Many of the Christian Fathers had more sense than Plutarch or Origen, and denied this absurd doctrine of the Stoics. Yet, strange to say, learned men and astronomers of far more recent times have put faith in these ancient chimeras. Cardinal Cojetan, in the 16th century, in his work, *Cœli cœlorumque virtutes*; Bertucci, a mathematician and philosopher of the 18th century, in his *De Telluris et Syderum Vita*; Bodin; Ricius; and, most wonderful of all, Kepler, the father of modern astronomy, the regenerator of the science of the heavens, and legislator of the stars!

The Christian Fathers were divided on another topic—the antipodes. It is difficult to say at how early a period the ancients comprehended the rotundity of the earth, and the existence of antipodes. Thales is the first whom we know to have asserted

these facts, 600 years before Christ; then Pythagoras, and afterwards Aristotle and Plato about 360 years before Christ. From that time till the error of Strabo, it was a moot question amongst the philosophers. Manilius, who is supposed to have lived in the time of Augustus, clearly demonstrated in verse the earth as a globe and the existence of the Australias:—

*Ex quo colligitur terrarum forma rotunda.
Hanc circum variae gentis hominum atque ferarum,
Aeris colunt volucres. Pars ejus ad Arctos
Eminet, Austrinis pars est habitabilis horis;
Sub pedibus jacet nostris, etc.*

Yet Lactantius in the fourth century fought stoutly against the antipodes, and after him St. Isidorus, St. Augustine, our own Bede, and Pope Zaccarius, who in the eighth century condemned and degraded the priest Virgilius for maintaining the perverse and iniquitous doctrine of there being another world and other men beneath us. But to go through all the odd notions of the ancient philosophers regarding the mode by which the earth was upheld in its place, regarding comets, eclipses, winds, volcanoes and the like, would be a long affair. In all cases they were the learned and scientific who imagined and propagated the wild traditions at which the simplest now smile. In no case, however, did they match the folly of our modern scientifics by imagining themselves the offspring of beasts, or that they had been toppled into this earth from some disrupted planet; and in no case did the popular portion of society produce the so-called popular errors of those days. Yet here were all these men, Greeks and Romans, for ages maintaining with an honourable exception that the heavenly bodies were no other than terrible animals running about the heavens at their will, and seeking food and drink: and at the same time, with also a few honourable exceptions, denying the rotundity of the earth and the antipodes, and bitterly abusive of all who asserted more rational ideas.

This is clearly the stereotyped character of the learned, philosophical and scientific class in all ages. They have been the perpetual originators of false theories and doctrines, of monsters and bugaboos abhorred by nature and common sense, which, when they can no longer be maintained, they father on the people and call popular errors. They are the fierce and rude opponents of the apostles of truth, who arise to diffuse higher light, and who necessarily bring the social position and scientific or literary reputation of these people into question. These men believed in a nation of giants—though where located they did not say,—and a nation of pigmies living near the sources of the Nile, of whom, Livingstone, however, has found no trace. They proclaimed those theories of hungry suns and planets,

just as Sir William Thompson, at the British Association, two years ago, proclaimed the peopling of this earth from the projected fragment of a disrupted globe: and just as Mr. Tyndall, in his discovery of a test for the solidity of prayer.

But perhaps the most curious thing of all is, that all these renowned people, who held the reins of the world's glory in their day, and made and maintained public opinion on all scientific and learned subjects, believed to a man in the Phoenix. They believed from the time of the visit of Herodotus to Egypt—and probably much earlier—that the Phoenix either grew old and died, and out of its decomposing body came forth a worm which soon developed into a new Phoenix; or that, according to others, the bird of Arabia, feeling the approach of old age—that is, of five thousand years—built its funeral-pyre of spices and aromatic woods, and burnt itself,—and out of its ashes came this wonderful worm, developing again into the immortal Phoenix.

And herein is a marvellous thing! Nothing less than the so-called Darwinian theory of development, existing and known to all the educated world in the days of Herodotus? Here is a bird dying, or self-destroyed, converted into a worm, and this worm speedily developing into the most gorgeous, wondrous and magnificent bird that ever was heard of.

The theory of development is complete; wanting only its application to the human race—an application, however, so obvious as not even to be clever; yet, unluckily, in both instances, ancient and modern, a theory equally baseless. Then, however, it was ready for use as any anomalous fancy might seize upon it. So, after all, the ardent aspirants after a reptile and monkey ancestry are but the humble copyists of these ancients, and copyists of them in their wildest invention. The theory of development, though as old as Herodotus, turns up amongst us as totally new, and instead of ennobling a bird, the creature of imagination, is employed to degrade the human race.

But the one valuable deduction from this review of the errors of the ancients is that the errors of the moderns will in due time, as they share the same nature, share inevitably the same fate. The reptile and ape theory of human ancestry will, doubtless, look to the world exactly as the hungry sun and planet system do now. It will become as fabulous as the fable of the Phoenix; and future philosophers and scientifics, to escape from the ridicule of any connection with it, will style it the *popular error* of the nineteenth century. The revivers of the theory of animal development, and the propagators of it in this direction, will be regarded as on a level with the Egyptian adorers of bulls, crocodiles, and beetles; and such they really would have been

had they existed in that country at that period, for their theories have the same downward tendencies, reptile and brutish. The men who infinitely prefer and rejoice in a lineage derived from the basest of creeping things—and sequently, from the grinning ape—to a descent from a directly God-created human being, have the same fetid tastes, “of the earth earthy,” as the abject adorers of stocks and stones, of lizards, beetles, and more abominable things. Such will be their place and estimation when science emancipates itself from its present slavery to mere matter, and from its hatred of revelation; whilst the now despised champions of nobler truths, based on adamantine facts, will stand immovably on their wisely-elected plane, that of the light which springs not phosphorescently from material conceptions, nor from self, but from above.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHY.

“It is no proof of a man’s understanding to be able to affirm whatever he pleases, but to be able to discern that what is true is true, and what is false is false; this is the mark and character of intelligence.”—*Swedenborg*.

“The soul answers never by words, but by the thing itself that is enquired after.”—*Emerson*.

THERE are many individuals who cross the stage of existence with much seeming ease, nevertheless, they evidently interweave themselves with many of the prominent questions of the day; they are to be found making up societies, talking, and, in some instances, writing cleverly upon difficult and strange subjects. If phenomena is brought before them, uncommon, and seemingly impossible, they with the more ease believe it on that account; and in almost no time will manufacture a theory to easily account for all conditions of the strange case.

There is a great difference between thus superficially viewing a principle just sufficiently for it to exist before the mind as an illusion or as something vaguely understood and freely talked about, and solidly realising a principle, clearing the eyes, and looking round it from all sides, seeing it as one of the great facts of a century, and appreciating fully the great issues that must follow.

The more I think on spirit-photography, and what has been written and done relative to it, the more convinces me I am right in my conclusion that it is the work of the few to realise a new principle and devote thought to it sufficient for its understanding.

In expressing my views on the philosophy of the question, I

take no notice of those who have not learned to reason, or who wilfully ignore the only tribunal before which questions can be tried. The verifying power of reason once laid aside, or imperfectly used, the search after truth becomes fruitless and barren of all good results.

I am not in any sense alluding—nor am I going to allude—to what has been written about real or unreal manifestations; but rather to what has been said upon supposed photographs of spirits, instead, as I conceive the matter to be, photographs by spirits.

Before one clear step can be taken in the enquiry, it is necessary to come to some conclusion as to the difference (if any) between matter and spirit. Now we can gain nothing by getting into metaphysical mist, and trying to get at any knowledge of things, or substances as they are in themselves. We do not know—and probably never can know—anything of the essence of things. This is equally true of matter and of spirit. All we can do is, to work up our perception of things into knowledge. Relative to the physical universe, all merely sensuous teaching, uncorrected by science, or associated observation, can never lead to any fruitful or practical result; and in the same sense, as Swedenborg writes, we are under the necessity of correcting our prejudices relative to spiritual things by the light of revelation.

The object of science is to reach truth through the misleading sensuous appearances of things, the duty of all science and philosophy is to bring all nature within the realm of mind. All mental possibilities for us must be within the range of observation and reflection; by their means only we can ascertain facts and catalogue them, then by a free and broad generalisation reduce them to law.

Adopting the view of things which deals with facts, as they are presented to us, in their associated relations, are we right in concluding that there is but one substance called matter, and that all manifestation is but the result of modified forms of that matter; or, does all the evidence, carefully looked at and well digested, not lead to the inference that matter and spirit are two essentially different substances, each obeying a distinctively different set of laws, and that by no conceivable process can they be transmuted? The nature of the one is life, the other death; the one positive force, the other complete inertia; the one not governed by space and time, the other governed by both; the one imponderable, the other ponderable; the one under given conditions conscious of existence and the manifestation of intelligence, the other not conceivably so; the one under other conditions not in any sense

subject to physical conditions, but on the contrary subjecting all physical condition to its use and purpose; lastly, the one purely of the nature of mind or cause, and the other that of result or effect.

All our most complete thinkers in the great schools of physical science, in order to account for the vast mechanism of things, are forced to the conclusion, that there exists an infinite ocean of ether, in which all material substance floats, and through which is transmitted all the forces in the physical universe; through its pulsations are revealed to us not only all immediate phenomena, but likewise the existence and actual constitution of the orbs that traverse space.

Is it not rational, then, to conceive of a universal substratum of spirit-substance, out of which all spiritual phenomena is evolved, in which the spiritual universe, with all its creations, move and have their being; a universal substance which when breathed upon by divine energy, becomes organised into recipient forms of God's love and wisdom, and into whose hands, and under whose power, all material substance becomes passive and plastic?

In photography, we have to deal with purely physical conditions. Is there any proof that in the production of these pictures, any other than physical conditions have had play? In other words, is there any proof that spirit-substance purely has ever influenced a prepared plate, by virtue of its spiritual radiations setting up chemical changes on the plate? or, on the contrary, are the photographs called spiritual, not as purely physical as any others produced by physical radiations thrown off from purely physical substance, the form of that substance having been given by intelligent beings *outside* of it, and moulded into shape for their purpose?

In the spirit-photographs taken under my own observation, I had considerable proof that spirit-substance was not photographed. The forms were, as forms, vague, but as photographs extremely well defined. The first twelve told us distinctly that experiments were going on in condensing elastic substance into human shape, as through these a process of growth towards more perfect form was evident.

In a second series, mechanical forms only were used, and as in the other case, a growth from a lower to a higher kind of the same form. And a third series followed. Now in many instances these forms were seen and described by individuals present during the time they were being exposed, besides the individuals controlling these forms would give full information how to light, and how long to expose them. Another principle connected with these series of photographs, when viewed as a whole (*and to be useful they must be seen as a whole*)—namely: that these forms are such, and are so singularly

related to one another, that even to the superficial it is impossible not to see that such a series of forms could never have been conceived of by any one who would have had a mind to deceive. In every case where I have shown them, and explained their nature to scientific men, they were extremely astonished, and saw at once, and admitted that not one man in ten thousand would have conceived of such forms, in any plan of deception. Some have suggested that these forms were produced for want of power to make higher. If so, the law then of growth from meaner to higher forms has really a noble use; I know that if higher forms had been given, none would have believed us—our experience would have been useless. The evidence in this special case is as if it was providential, and serves a purpose that could not have been served by any other kind of forms or way of doing it.

But this is a little from my purpose. We daily hear of spirit-photographs being made, many of them said to be recognised as likenesses of friends of long ago; we hear daily of spirit-faces being seen, spirit-drapery being materialised. Now, are the photographs any other than material resemblances, moulded by spiritual beings, of substances capable, when so condensed, of throwing off energy very actively? Are the faces more than material forms upon which light may impinge, and which in some cases of darkness, are self-luminous?

I have seen many of the photographs said to be likenesses; I have two before me now; the same gentleman in both. In one there is with him a sitting figure half under the carpet, clearly from an etching of a face, with a *profile type, exactly like* his own; in the other, there is a standing figure extremely tall and ill defined. *In both cases it is said to be his mother.* A first-class artist examined them with me, *and no likeness could be discovered between the two.* The sitting figure evidently had been taken by the spirit-artist from some drawing.

I mention all this to combat the notion that the actual spirit can be photographed. I have seen a large number of them which I believed to be genuine, but in no case have I seen them indicating the free play of true life.

Besides, we cannot believe spiritual light to depend upon physical laws such as reflection, refraction, absorption, etc., but rather on states of the perceiving mind.

If I am right, within the range of psychological phenomena, spirit-photography must take a high place in usefulness, if marked by suitable evidence, without which all manifestations are worthless.

We know it to be a fact that impressions even of the highest value, if not varied or followed up, get rubbed out from the

mind. I have the greatest difficulty, nay, I find it impossible to recall and properly realize much I have seen, and its influence upon my mind and life has long gone. How valuable to the long absent traveller are the photographs in his book! With what force do they recall former scenes and associations; how many faces and stories does each picture bring back to the mind! So with the spirit-photograph; its use can hardly be fully estimated. I know families who have had marvellous experiences, and have long ago passed from under their influence; if they could look now and then on a photograph, whose existence could not have been if immortality was not a fact, and if those they long had surrendered, as they thought, to the earth, were not now living spiritual realities, like the direct writing of the fac-simile of the name of some loved one. A spirit-photograph cannot be argued out of sight; it must take the first place as evidence. With minds requiring conviction of Spiritualism, after conviction the mind will, if of the true Christian type, soon hunger after higher food, in the shape of evidence of the possibility of all the wonderful records given in the sacred writings of the Old and New Testament; and the Spiritualist once convinced of the great central truth of immortality, if he will but push his enquiries far enough and with a clear unprejudiced mind, will see that instead of being led away from the truth of Christ by Spiritualism, light radiating from so many sources will become focalised upon the Holy Jesus and His teaching that they will become more brilliantly luminous than they ever appeared before.

JOHN BEATTIE.

Clifton, December 10th, 1872.

SINGULAR DREAM OF CHARLES DICKENS WHEN
AT GENOA, 1844,
WITH OTHER PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES.

"LET me tell you," wrote Dickens to his friend and biographer Forster, "of a curious dream I had last Monday night; and of the fragments of reality I can collect, which helped to make it up. I have had a return of rheumatism in my back, and knotted round my waist like a girdle of pain; and had lain awake nearly all that night, when I fell asleep and dreamed this dream. Observe that throughout I was as real, animated and full of passion, as Macready in the last scene of *Macbeth*. In an

indistinct place, which was quite sublime in its indistinctness, I was visited by a spirit. I could not make out the face, nor do I recollect that I desired to do so. It wore a blue drapery, as the Madonna might in a picture by Raphael; and bore no resemblance to any one I have known except in stature. I think (but I am not sure) that I recognized the voice. Any way, I knew that it was poor Mary's spirit. I was not at all afraid, but in a great delight, so that I wept very much, and stretching out my arms to it, called it 'Dear.' At this I thought it recoiled; and I felt immediately that not being of my gross nature, I ought not to have addressed it so familiarly. 'Forgive me,' I said, 'We poor living creatures are only able to express ourselves by looks and words. I have only used the word most natural to *our* affections, and you know my heart.' It was so full of compassion and sorrow for me—which I knew spiritually, for, as I said sobbing, 'Oh! give me some token that you have really visited me!' 'Form a wish,' it said. I thought, reasoning with myself—'If I form a selfish wish, it will vanish.' So I hastily discarded such hopes and anxieties of my own as came into my mind, and said, 'Mrs. Hogarth is surrounded with great distresses—' observe I never thought of saying 'your mother' as to a mortal creature. 'Will you extricate her?' 'Yes.' 'And her extrication is to be a certainty to me that this has really happened?' 'Yes.' 'But answer me one other question!' I said, in an agony of entreaty lest it should leave me. '*What is the true religion?*' As it paused a moment without replying, I said, 'Good God!' in such an agony of haste lest it should go away, 'You think as I do that the form of religion does not so greatly matter, if we try to do good?' 'Or,' I said, observing that it still hesitated, and was moved with the greatest compassion for me, 'perhaps the Roman Catholic is the best? Perhaps it makes me think of God oftener, and believe in him more steadily?' 'For you,' said the spirit full of such heavenly tenderness for me, that I felt as if my heart would break; 'For you it is the best!' Then I awoke with the tears running down my face, and myself in exactly the condition of the dream. It was just dawn. I called up Kate, and repeated it three or four times over that I might not unconsciously make it plainer or stronger afterwards. It was exactly this—free from all hurry, nonsense or confusion, whatsoever. Now the strings I can gather up, leading to this were three. The first you know from the main subject of my last letter. The second was, that there is a great altar in our bed room, at which some family who once inhabited this palace, had mass performed in old time; and I had observed within myself, before going to bed, that there was a mark in the wall above the sanctuary, where a

religious picture used to be; and I had wondered within myself what the subject might have been, and *what the face was like*. Thirdly, I had been listening to the convent bells which ring at intervals in the night, and so had thought, no doubt, of the Roman Catholic services. And yet all this, put the case of that wish being fulfilled by any agency in which I had no hand; and I wonder whether I should regard it as a dream, or an actual vision."—*Forster's "Life of Charles Dickens,"* vol. ii, p. 122.

A curious instance of *Sortes Virgilianæ* is given at p. 215 of the second volume.

Dickens says, writing to his friend, Mr. Forster, when at Lausanne, about the commencement of *Dombey*, "I performed this feat yesterday. . . . By-the-way, as I was unpacking the big box, I took hold of a book and said to them—'Now, whatever passage my thumb rests on I shall take as having reference to my work.' It was *Tristram Shandy*, and opened at these words, '*What a work it is likely to turn out. Let us begin it.*' "

It would appear that whenever about to commence one of his books, and indeed frequently when composing them, Dickens—as if impelled by the operation of some subtle psychological law—sought instinctively to fling himself into the life of the crowds of great cities; only then pacing by himself the streets—frequently at night—did the inspiration fall upon him. As the "Awen" is said to have alone descended upon the Welsh bards when they slept upon a mountain summit, gathered up into the sublime spirit of their wild hills, so possibly could only the essentially human genius inspiring Dickens's creations take possession of him in fulness of power in the dense of human atmosphere. Probably it was needed for him, so to speak, to steep himself in the "aromal" sphere of every-day humanity, in order to give to the world in concrete form the intensest essence of its flavour. As essential to the full development of Dickens's power was the environment of a city, probably, as the entire solitude of nature to the development of such poetry as that of Wordsworth. The consideration of sphere in connection with the production of works of art, whether in literature, painting, sculpture and music, is one worthy of reflection to the philosophical Spiritualist.

This is peculiarly illustrated by the following passage:—

"But the difficulty of going at what I call a rapid pace is prodigious; it is almost an impossibility. I suppose this is partly the effect of two years' care, and partly the absence of streets and numbers of figures. I can't express how I went there. *It seems as if they supplied something to my brain which I cannot bear to lose.* For a week or a fortnight I can write prodigiously in a

retired place (as at Broadstairs), and a day in London sets me up again and starts me. But the toil and labour of writing day after day, without that magic-lantern is IMMENSE! . . . I only mention this as a curious fact, which I have never had an opportunity of finding out before. *My figures seem disposed to stagnate without crowds about them.*"

And in another way do crowds and streets seem to have been needful to Dickens to preserve in him a needful balance of *mental electricity*,—if such an expression may be used. When once his creations had been called into full life in his mind, they haunted him like spectres, and it was only in the presence of crowds of humanity that he could lose them and, so to speak, bury them. He says again, writing from Lausanne:—"The absence of any accessible streets continues to worry me, now that I have so much to do, in a singular manner. It is quite a little mental phenomenon. I should not walk in them in the daytime, if they were here, I dare say; but at night I want them beyond description. *I don't seem able to get rid of my spectres unless I can lose them in crowds.*"

THE ANTI-BIBLE AND THE BIBLE CRAZE.

WHY do some minds feel a strong antipathy to the Bible, while others revere it as the "Word of God?" Is it not chiefly because the clergy insist upon the absolute truth of every word in sacred history in contrast with the fallibility of profane traditions and poetic fables? And is not this an untenable and mischievous hypothesis? Is there not a rational exegesis which distinguishes traditional relations of events from moral laws, and real inspirations with which they are connected, as the husks of natural fruits with the kernels they contain?

What is the Bible but a traditional history of communications between humanity in the spiritual world and humanity in the natural world, through the mediumship of ministering spirits, "angels of the Lord" speaking in the name of God, to prophets and seers in the flesh; which words of God from the higher spheres to mankind in this world have been handed down by tradition, along with accounts of times and places, persons, events, prodigies and conditions connected with these revelations? And in this case, which are the most important points, the spiritual revelations, or the traditional history of the persons and conditions in which they were given and received? Evidently the Revelations. And which are the most likely to be disfigured by oral communications and traditions, handed down

from generation to generation, the main facts or the marvellous conditions which accompanied the revelations? The facts of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt, and giving them the tables of the law as he received them from the angel of God, are more important than the history of the "marvellous manner" in which he accomplished his mission, and much less liable to be altered by traditional repetitions of the magical story; and so with all the other revelations and traditions of the Bible, not to mention the conflicting accounts of genealogies and prodigies in the Gospels.

But why should God allow His *Word* to be entangled with profane magic or the imperfections of traditional fables and exaggerations, so as to render any rational exegesis necessary? We answer this question by another: why did God create the natural world in such a form as to render the exercise of human reason and discrimination necessary to understand it; especially where wolves and tigers, crocodiles and rattlesnakes, frogs and toads, fleas and scorpions, tapeworms and many other loathsome parasites of the human body, give to creation the appearance of a diabolical design rather than a work of infinite love and wisdom? And these creations are not magical delusions, nor traditional fables and exaggerations of human invention, but real monsters of divine origin and providential perpetuation.

"The mystery of iniquity" is not a riddle of spiritual revelation alone, but a problem of natural revelation also, which human reason must attempt to solve before it can fully understand the ways of Providence in either the natural or the spiritual worlds.

Without however penetrating into these depths of mystery, in the word and in the works of Deity, we may apply simple common sense to the work of natural and spiritual exegesis, or discrimination between that which is edible in natural and spiritual fruit, and that which is not; since natural fruits are food for the body, and spiritual fruits are food for the soul.

In dealing with natural fruits, we apply a double operation before we deem them fit to eat; first we separate husks from seeds or kernels, and then, if requisite, we boil or bake or otherwise prepare seeds or edible parts to render them palatable or more easily digestible. They undergo in fact, many kinds of preparation, to suit our appetites for natural food; and we should look with amazement upon cooks who would advise us to swallow all kinds of fruit exactly as we find them put forth by nature.

What are we to think of spiritual cooks then, who present us with the fruits of Scripture as equally fit for spiritual food in all their parts, traditional husks and central revelations,

together, without due separation and discrimination? Are we to be told that there are no fruits of the spiritual world surrounded by indigestible husks of tradition and magic or poetic fable? Idle and superstitious spiritual expounders of the Bible may tell us so, but even monkeys and squirrels crack nuts and throw away indigestible shells before they eat the kernels.

Sectarian theologies, we may be told, offer us a great variety of spiritual distillations and preparations of doctrine for spiritual sustentation; but none of the mere husks of tradition afford good spiritual food, however elaborately ground to powder and mixed with spiritual truths. There must be real discrimination and due separation by a rational and spiritual exegesis before the fruits of revelation in the Bible can be thoroughly recognized and duly appreciated by the modern mind, accustomed to positive forms of thought and logical modes of reasoning.

Many of the so-called "miracles," are now perceived to be no miracles at all, but merely unusual occurrences of spiritual phenomena under certain conditions, in accordance with natural laws, not clearly understood in all their bearings. Modern experience however shows the possibility of so-called miraculous or spiritual manifestations, where the causes of such phenomena are as obscure as those of all other natural and spiritual phenomena, such as those of sleep and wakefulness, life and death, somnambulism and trance, growth and decay, heat and cold, gravitation and cohesion, chemical affinity and magnetism; while certain other so-called "miracles," real or fabulous, are unessential to the truths of revelation; nor does it aid the truths of religion to confound essentials with non-essentials of revelation and tradition.

What are we to think, then, of the two opposite classes of mind, the blindly credulous and the utterly incredulous, who insist upon all Scripture being perfectly divine, or none? As well might they insist upon all parts of natural fruit being edible, or none. When were oral traditions ever handed down from one generation to another without alteration and imaginative exaggerations of the simple truth? And why should sacred history be more free from human frailty of this kind than profane traditions?

But is it worth while to reason with unreasonable people?

Will they not be as credulous and as incredulous as they like, without understanding, in spite of all that can be said or done? Very likely, but then they will know why other people pay little heed to silly superstition or to sceptical stolidity.

The Bible and the Prayer-book craze does not perhaps beget the Anti-bible craze, but it challenges opposition and creates dissent, not only in the naturally sceptical mind, but also in the

rationally open mind. The "infallibility" of popes and churches now-a-days seems out of keeping with the progress of the age.

The "faithful" in the churches may perhaps feel little or no need of any rational exegesis of the Bible, but rational believers should be able to show sceptics that criticisms of Egyptian feats of magic and traditional discrepancies, have no real bearing on essential points of revelation and religious truth; nor even on the possibility of certain phenomena erroneously deemed "miraculous" or "contrary to the laws of nature;" since actual occurrences, well testified in the present day, and accurately described in all the authentic histories of past ages of the world, give ample proof to all who seriously investigate the phenomena of modern spiritual manifestations, that similar phenomena are witnessed in our day, in evident accordance with natural laws and forces, however little understood these laws and forces may be by human science in its present state.

There is a positive ground then, of rational exegesis on which enlightened believers and intelligent sceptics who confound vague traditions with true revelations, may meet and reason together on questions of religious faith and moral law, as elements of human progress and perfective evolution. Spiritual manifestations give us facts to deal with, and a rational exegesis of the Bible may be founded on these facts, in parallel with those of sacred Scripture and tradition. Such a study of the facts and laws of spiritual intercourse between mankind in this world and human spirits or angels in the unseen world, may be equally useful to confirmed believers and hesitating unbelievers.

All religions are subject to the laws of progressive evolution, as well as other social and political institutions, and a rapid survey of history will show us how different religions have come into existence, flourished for a time, and then diminished, to be replaced by new religions, subject to like conditions of growth and decay, as humanity progresses from a lower to a higher state of intellectual development and general civilisation. Nor is it difficult to note the common grounds of all religious faith, along with the common causes of decline and natural renovation or reformation. The principles of divinity which correspond to those of humanity are the same in all religions in all ages, and may be briefly stated thus—*Spirit, Mind, Body*, in humanity; *Love, Wisdom, Power*, in Divinity. Oracles of Love and Wisdom from above utter revelations, which call forth priests and interpretations, churches and traditions, and thence we have different religions, theologies, and rituals, with various symbolisms, superstitions, and idolatries; ecclesiasticisms, infallibilities, and

temporalities; whence intolerant authorities, dictations, and persecutions; engendering rebellions, refutations, and reformations, or the rise of new churches and religions on the ruins of corrupt ecclesiasticisms and churches.

Doctrines of immortality and moral responsibility are common to all religions, but vary in different churches and in different ages, not so much perhaps in the early phases of religious evolution, as in the declining phases of traditional dogmatism. It is curious from this point of view to compare the doctrines of ultramundane judgment and moral responsibility taught by the ancient Egyptian and other Pagan religions, with the doctrines taught by modern Christian churches, high and low. In Pagan times, various degrees of judgment in the heavens, and numerous vicissitudes of destiny and progress in a future state, were described by theologians, with something like rational views of divine justice and moral responsibility for deeds done in the flesh, whereas no such views of common sense and justice are taught by the majority of Christian theologians of the present day. Heaven is a place and state of eternal beatitude, beyond description, or at any rate, without description; hell is a place and state of eternal torment, with awful descriptions of fire and brimstone; the one as a reward for *faith alone*, in the redeeming blood of the Saviour, irrespective of good works and moral conduct; the other a punishment for unbelief, equally irrespective of moral conduct. No principles of justice, either human or divine, are even mentioned in connection with these doctrines; and all ideas of progress or repentance and purification in a future state are utterly ignored or scouted by our Protestant theology.

If this be not one of the signs of religious decay and clerical impuissance, we are unable to say what are the signs of spiritual growth and decline in the present day; but the eagerness with which even hoary-headed unbelievers accept the assurances of moral responsibility and progress in a future state, as taught by the modern oracles of Spiritualism, leads us to believe that sectarian theology is losing hold on the hearts and minds of the people; and that nothing less than a complete revival of primitive Christianity can save the churches from decay and gradual abandonment. They may perhaps live on for a time, as the Jews live on, a type of palæozoic ritual and doctrine (in the midst of new spiritual churches and communities) superannuated in forms and symbolisms, while true to principles and firm in faith.

Another inept doctrine of theology is that of the resurrection of the mortal body, long ages after it has been utterly destroyed, or buried at the bottom of the sea, ignoring the

existence of the spiritual body, and its immediate resurrection with the spirit, as it leaves the earthly frame. Here again the spirits satisfy the mind with regard to their living consciousness and physical reality soon after they have left the mortal body and entered a new world of practical existence.

It is not so much the Bible itself, as the absurd theology distilled from it by clerical irrationality which excites antipathy and incredulity in many minds open to conviction, where spiritual facts and revelations are corroborated by experience and harmonised with reason. Common sense suffices to distinguish in a book of revelations and traditions (such as the Bible) that which is essential from that which is non-essential, or of only secondary importance, but then common sense is of various kinds in different classes of minds, and especially with regard to religion; some being naturally superstitious while others are truly religious, and some minds may be critical and sceptical while others are utterly indifferent and scoffing, or perverse and irreligious. *Superstition* and blind credulity seem natural to poverty of spirit or weak minds, just as mendicity and sycophancy are natural to paupers and persons who are too indolent to work for a living; they want to enjoy the good things of heaven and of earth without any efforts of their own, and think that by fawning upon those in power they can shirk responsibility and gain their ends. *True religion* is more manly and courageous, modest and conscientious, willing to do good and be responsible for its own shortcomings; willing, in fact, to pay all its debts, "even to the last farthing," rather than be a fawning hypocrite and a spiritual defaulter. *Scepticism* is not perhaps always quite so scrupulous in spiritual matters; it seems in some cases to hug the idea that duty is a word without meaning; that religion is a cunning device to entrap weak minds; that revelations and traditions are contradictory stories; that nature gives more power to one animal than to another; to one man than to another, and that might is right, as a privilege to be enjoyed without regard to conventional or so-called religious notions of justice and benevolence, piety and duty. This however is the worst kind of scepticism, verging on recklessness and cunning, and may perhaps more properly be called perverse irrationality; while a simply logical mind perfectly conscientious in social and moral relations, may be puzzled to reconcile Biblical traditions with each other, and with known facts of history or laws of science. A little reflection may enable this class of minds to discern the difference between spiritual revelations and fallible traditions in the Bible, and true religion from puerile superstition, while no amount of reason can cure sycophantic superstition, or perverse animality.

Wise parents do not bring up their children to be idlers and

paupers however willing to help them in their troubles, nor does Providence encourage spiritual idleness and superstition. As Mr. Spurgeon once said in a sermon, "religious formalists cannot gammon God Almighty by idle professions, so that they must be gammoning themselves." But whence comes scepticism? Is it not the offspring of tyrannical superstition?

Scepticism is a natural antagonist of authoritative superstition, or religion in a silly senile state. Christ did not deny the truths of the Bible, but he accused the Jewish sects of not being true to the principles of their religion. Spiritualists do not deny the truths of the Gospel, but they charge sectarians with not being true to the spirit of the Word. Sectarian churches have smothered Christianity in a heap of theological dogmatism, and made it a religion of respectability and show; no longer a religion of the poor who hunger and thirst for spiritual comfort and refreshment. Each Christian sect turns round and round from generation to generation, in a theological circle like a horse in a gin, without raising the pure waters of the spirit from the depths of the Gospel, as the horse raises the natural water from the depths of a well; this is what the Jews were doing in Palestine, before the advent of the Saviour. The religious progress of humanity is a spiral movement, each new cycle rising higher than the one below, while all belong to the same root, and only carry the same truth from one degree of elevation to another and a higher. Christ did not come to annul the law, but to fulfil it; Spiritualism does not annul the Gospel, but wishes to realise it in spirit and in truth, and not to stifle it by superstitious formalism, irrationality and dogmatism.

The heathen religions did a great work in their time, although heathen nations have sunk into insignificance; the Jewish religion did a great work in its time, although the Jews have been dispersed to the ends of the earth; the Christian religion has done a great work in its time, although all sects of Christians have been more or less befooled by theological dogmatisms, and their principles rendered of no effect by means of adventitious incrustations and dogmatical perversions. The spirit quits a worn-out body but does not die with the flesh; nor does the spirit of religion die with the worn-out dogmatisms of churches, although it quits the flesh-pots of Egypt, in a spiritual exodus from one ecclesiastical organism to another and a better; not once alone with Moses and the Israelites, but with every revolution of a spiritual nature which marks the general progress of humanity.

The human foetus in the womb passes through many successive phases of organic evolution, from one rudimental form to another and a higher, but the type is always human in

principle, though seemingly more animal than human in the earliest phases of development; and so it is with the collective evolutions of humanity. The religious forms of revelation and social organization are very imperfect in the early history of mankind, but still the principles of social unity and moral responsibility are the same from the beginning, and become more evident in each succeeding phase of spiritual revelation and religious evolution. There is but one human form divine, in every phase of foetal evolution; one form of truth divine, in every phase of religious evolution. And yet how different a caterpillar seems from a butterfly!

H. DOHERTY.

SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHS.—A GOOD TEST.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I have had for some time an idea that I could impose a condition on Hudson's photographing by which, should the result be successful, some minds might be assisted in forming an opinion.

Yesterday being fine, I called on him in the afternoon. Hudson was not busy; no professional medium was present. He and I were chatting in the parlour, and more particularly of his being the medium for the manifestations. He kindly suggested experimenting, and we went into the glass house. I had told him nothing of my intention.

The first plate was put in in the usual way and on developing it no spirit-form appeared. "Never mind," said Hudson, "I will try three"—so a second plate was prepared, I was placed and focussed in the usual way, but at the moment he was about to remove the cap, I said, "Wait a minute, I want the glass removed." So I got up, went into the dark room, had the glass removed and turned *upside down*, and I took my seat again without being focussed. On this plate appeared after development a very distinct spirit-form, but *not upside down* as it ought to have been according to the imputed mode of imposture and the laws of photography.

A third plate was tried and put in, and Hudson said, "I suppose you want this turned upside down," suiting the action to the word; but I said, "No, you can let it remain as it is." On this no spirit-form appeared. Hudson did not demur the least to the experiment being tried, but was pleased at the idea.

Assuming for the sake of argument, the trickery and previous manipulation which has been imputed, how a photographer

granting such a simple request enormously augments his difficulties and his chances of exposure, for it is impossible for him to foresee the intention of the sitter, as to the way he wishes the glass placed. Another point seems suggested by this experiment, is whether the operating intelligence did not foresee my intention, and reserve the power for that plate where the test was to be applied.

JOSEPH IVIMEY.

34, Euston Square, N.W.,
December 5th, 1872.

FURTHER EVIDENCE FROM THE SPIRITUAL SIDE.

In some Notes of a *Séance* with Messrs. Herne and Williams, at 61, Lamb's Conduit Street, on Friday, December 6th, in daylight, at half-past 3 p.m., at which were present Dr. Dixon and a lady friend, Mr. and Mrs. Burns, and Mrs. Andrews, is the following statement by Mr. Burns, editor of the *Medium* :—

“ John King entered into conversation about photographs of himself which have been taken at Mr. Hudson's. In doing so he placed himself in various attitudes, saying, ‘ Here is how I stood in Mrs. Berry's picture; this is how I stood in Mrs. Burns's picture, and I lifted my arm up so when I sat by the side of Mrs. Andrews.’ ”

“ These three photos, and another in which John King appears, may be seen at the Spiritual Institution, and they are four thoroughly recognisable pictures of the same person, and that person was the one who was seen in the cabinet as John King, on Friday afternoon last. What is more remarkable is, that Mrs. Burns's photograph is one containing what self-styled scientific photographers call ‘ *unmistakable evidences of double exposure.*’ *On the background there is a three-cornered rent, which appears twice, and yet there is undisputable evidence of its being a genuine spirit-photograph.* A little more science would perhaps have driven the adverse critics to confess that there had indeed been a double exposure: one of the natural kind, giving the image of Mrs. Burns; and another of the psychical kind, giving an image of John King, but causing a refraction of the rays so as to make marks in the back ground appear double. It is worthy of notice that the spirit-photographs considered spurious contain images of spirits of a particularly dense and physical kind, which may account for that condition of psychical atmosphere which would refract the rays of light, and interfere with the normal presentment of natural objects on the picture.”

AN APPEAL TO THE SPIRITUALISTS AND LIBERALS OF THE WORLD.

IN describing the great fire which has laid a large part of Boston in ashes, the *Boston Herald* says:—

“ William White and Co., publishers of the *Banner of Light*, lost their printing material and stock of books, but saved their business records except the cash book, which was lost in the street, with a bundle of manuscripts.”

Nor is this all. In the subsequent fire in Boston on November 20th, a large portion of their stereotype plates and other property stored in a neighbouring building was also destroyed, their total loss being estimated at over 35,000 dollars. The establishment had been insured in four Boston offices for 20,000 dollars, but as these have all been made bankrupt not more than 30 per cent. of this, if so much, is expected to be recovered, and even this cannot be paid for perhaps a year.

In view of this terrible calamity Messrs. White and Company have put forth “ An Appeal to the Spiritualists and Liberals of the World ” for pecuniary aid, and express the hope that they will soon be enabled to re-issue their *Banner of Light*. This appeal is signed—“ William White, Luther Colby, Isaac B. Rich, No. 14, Hanover Street, Boston, Mass.” They say:—

“ We ask in behalf of the spirit-world, whose organ the *Banner* still hopes to be! We ask in behalf of our common humanity, that has derived so many and vast benefits through the message department, acknowledgments of which have come from every quarter of the globe! We ask in behalf of the thousands of spirits who have not as yet had the opportunity, but are anxious to send, through our instrumentality, messages of love to their dear ones in the earth-life.”

The *Banner of Light* is the oldest Spiritualist newspaper in existence, having been established in 1856, and has had a wider circulation than any other. Even when dissenting from some of its utterances we have always admired its brave, fearless outspoken character. We trust the appeal now made in this the hour of its sorest need will everywhere meet with prompt and generous response from the Spiritualists and Liberals of the world. Our publisher will be happy to remit any subscriptions our friends may be disposed to send, or they can transmit them direct to Messrs. White and Company, 14, Hanover Street, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* for November relates an interesting case of a spiritual apparition in Hampshire. The *Contemporary Review* has an article entitled “ Miracles and Fact,” by the Rev. T. W. Fowle.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

THE DEBATE BETWEEN MR. BRADLAUGH AND MR. BURNS.

A PUBLIC discussion on "Modern Spiritualism," between Mr. Charles Bradlaugh (the well-known secularist leader) and Mr. James Burns, was held at the Hall of Science, Old Street, City Road, on the evenings of December 16th and 17th. Notwithstanding the incessant rain, the subject attracted a large audience who listened with earnest attention to both speakers. We confess we have not much faith in this kind of public debate, which is generally more a test of the readiness and dialectical skill of the respective disputants than of the substantial merits of the question in debate. Spiritualism, like physical science, is more a subject of investigation than for disputation; and when fairly investigated, and the facts for arriving at a proper judgment are presented, there is seldom occasion for disputation: without such investigation there is no common ground of argument. To those who have not personally witnessed the facts, and have nothing analogous to them in their own experience or in the experience of persons known to them in whom they can confide, they will seem incredible; while those who personally know them to be true, cannot be moved by any argument to the contrary, though urged with all the ability of so experienced and skilful a debater as Mr. Bradlaugh. When the facts of Spiritualism are fully recognised, they may be discussed with some hope of advantage, so far as their discussion is not precluded by being no longer necessary. Till that time arrives, we can only hope that such debates may possibly lead a few earnest inquirers to a careful consideration of the evidence of Spiritualism, now so abundant, and to a thorough and as far as possible unprejudiced personal investigation of the whole subject.

THE "BRITISH QUARTERLY REVIEW" ON IMMORTALITY.

The *British Quarterly Review*, for October last, contains a lengthy and able article on "Immortality," in which the writer considers the consequences that may be expected were there a general disbelief in the life after death. These consequences, he contends, would be most disastrous both to the individual and to society. In our mind there is no doubt of it; and it is, therefore, of the first importance that this great truth of religion should be placed on no uncertain ground of tradition or authority, or metaphysical argument, but on the firm, sure ground of proven demonstratable facts; not alone of historical fact, but of present facts accessible to all sincere and earnest investigators. In

pointing out the path by which they have attained not alone to a conviction but to a knowledge of immortality, and by which others may also acquire that knowledge, Spiritualists are doing an essential and much-needed service; they deserve the sympathy and good-will of Christians of all churches in thus presenting absolute and conclusive proof of this fundamental article of their common faith.

We hope that in a future number the British Quarterly Review will direct attention to the proof of immortality which Spiritualism supplies; and apart from which there is little reason to expect that it will ever be other than a matter of disbelief with not a few, and an open question with many more.

A CANDID CRITIC.

The *Dublin Journal of Medical Science* for September, 1872, in reviewing the recent essays on "Psychic Force" by Mr. Crookes and Serjeant Cox, observes:—"It is not true, as has been stated, that these so-called phenomena were investigated and thoroughly detected as impostures, fifteen years ago. The former investigation, viewed in the light of the alleged facts, is, to a great extent, utterly worthless, and the time has come for a *real* scientific examination of these very remarkable statements."

The reviewer concludes his survey of the experiments of Mr. Crookes with an expression of opinion that "the time has come when these manifestations should be carefully examined into by the highest scientific authorities, so that any sources of mistake or deception should be clearly made public; for though we hold a very decided opinion on the subject, yet it is not competent for any reviewer to reject the evidence offered, on the ground of any *à priori* doubt. We sympathise with Mr. Crookes in the rejection of his paper by the Royal Society; and, if the public are in possession of the whole facts of the case, we certainly think that, in the interests of science, he has been unfairly treated. The *à priori* argument has been used fallaciously, we think, in this enquiry. On the same ground one might deny any electrical power in the *Gymnotus* because the *Conger* had none. Besides, we have undoubted reason to believe in the dynamicity of will-force."

SPIRITUALISM IN GLASGOW.

An extended discussion on "Spiritualism" has recently been carried on in the *North British Daily Mail*, with much ability and good temper on both sides, and a greater interest in Spiritualism

has in consequence been excited in Glasgow and its neighbourhood than has ever perhaps been felt before. There is a general call for good test mediums and physical manifestations. There is quite a revival among the Glasgow Spiritualists, who have given some capital lectures, and which have been unusually well attended.

A HAUNTED POLICE CELL.

Few positions in life can be imagined more disagreeable than that of being imprisoned in a haunted cell in a police station. The *New Orleans Times* tells a most unpleasant story of a ghost-infested cell in the Fourth Precinct police station in that city. It appears that several years ago "a little old woman" named Ann Murphy committed suicide by hanging herself in this cell, and since that event no fewer than thirteen persons shut up in the cell have attempted to destroy themselves in a similar manner, four of these attempts being attended with fatal results. One of those lately cut down before life was extinct was a girl named Mary Taylor, who, on recovering consciousness, declared that while lying on the floor of the cell she was aroused by a little old white woman, dressed in a faded calico dress, "with brown jeans and josey," no stockings, and down-trodden slippers, with a faded handkerchief tied round her head. Her faded dress was bound with a sort of reddish-brown tape, and her hand was long, faded, and wrinkled, while on the fourth finger of her left hand was a plain thin gold ring. "This little woman," said the girl, "beckoned me to get up, and impelled me by some mysterious power to tear my dress in strips, place one end of a strip round my neck and tie the other to the bars. I lifted my feet from the floor and fell. I thought I was choking, a thousand lights seemed to flash before my eyes, and I forgot all until I found myself in the room, with the doctors and police bending over me. It was not until then I really comprehended what I had done, and was, I believe, under a kind of trance or influence at the time, over which I had no control." Mary Taylor had never heard of the suicide of Ann Murphy, whose appearance, according to the police, exactly tallied with the description given by the girl. Others having complained in like manner of the ghostly occupant of the cell, the police, to test the real facts of the case, placed a night lodger, who had but just arrived in the city, in this cheerful apartment. Being thoroughly tired and worn out, he fell asleep immediately, but shortly afterwards rushed into the office in a state of terrible alarm. He, too, had been visited by the little old woman, and wisely declined to sleep another hour in the station.—*Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 22nd, 1872.

HERNE AND WILLIAMS IN THE NETHERLANDS.—FLOWERS
BROUGHT BY SPIRITS.

Mr. A. J. Riko, 71, Molenstraat, the Hague, has written a lengthy and interesting report of the remarkable spirit manifestations in the Netherlands, through the mediumship of Messrs. Herne and Williams, and which as he points out fully confirms the accuracy of the observations made by English Spiritualists, as reported in this Magazine and other journals. These manifestations seem to have given very general satisfaction and conviction, but we have only space to quote the following incident:—

“*Tuesday, October 22nd.*—We sat upstairs in a quite darkened room. Not liking too much noise, I left the bell and triangle on the sofa, and put the other instruments on the table around which we sat, joining hands as usual. Within a few minutes my wife, who sat near me, exclaimed that something was put on her head; upon getting a light the article fell on her lap, and we found a fresh branch of beautiful flowers (fuchsias). The leaves were still wet, and not a single part of these tender flowers was broken or even crushed. There were no such flowers in the house. There were some at my house, and also at the Hotel Kaiserhof; but after close inspection on the following day, I found they were of quite a different kind, and not so large nor so fresh; indeed the flowers brought were not present at any of the houses frequented by the mediums.”

A PRESENTIMENT AND APPARITION.

The following paragraph is from the *Daily Mail*, of Birmingham, November 19th:—

A remarkable presentiment of death experienced by a James Bridge, miner, and the fulfilment of his apprehensions, would furnish Dr. Carpenter or Professor Huxley with curious material on which to build up a psychological theory. The facts, as related by our contemporary the *Gazette*, are as follow:—“During the night preceding the accident, deceased awoke his wife, and told her he felt a ton weight of rock upon his head. She endeavoured to persuade him that it was headache, but he was quite free from that complaint. He said he could not sleep, and requested his wife to place their only child beside him. In the morning he appeared very reluctant to go to work, and on his wife reminding him that he would be late if he did not make haste, he went to the bedside where the child lay, and said, ‘Let me have my last kiss.’ He went to work, and while ‘setting a tree’ a quantity of rock fell from the roof of the pit and fractured his skull. But strange though this may appear, it is by no means the most singular incident connected with this melancholy affair. It appears that deceased has a cousin—also a miner—between whom and himself there had always existed a more than ordinary friendship, and that this cousin, who had been on the night shift in a neighbouring pit, was returning home, and just about the moment the accident occurred he saw the deceased standing before him in the highway. So struck was he with this strange occurrence, that he hastened to the deceased’s house, there to receive melancholy confirmation of

the doubts raised in his mind by the apparition he had seen. In this locality miners have had presentiments of their fate. Not very long ago a miner who resided at Bloxwich went to his work, but, when about half way to the pit, which was about a mile and a half or two miles from his home, he had a presentiment that he would that morning be killed. He returned home, and requested his wife to assemble the children, and when this was done he read a chapter of the Bible, and then engaged in prayer. He then took farewell of his wife and children, and having done so went to his work, but he had not been at work many minutes when he was killed on the spot by a fall of rock." Village gossip may have magnified the details, but there is evidently a sufficient basis of truth in them to render a scientific inquiry worth making.

THROWING OF BRICKS AND OTHER SUBSTANCES BY SPIRITS.

The Belfast Weekly News of 9th November, quotes from the *Macon Enterprise* of October 21st, an account of "A Georgia Sensation." At a railway station, where there are only a few houses, lives a Mr. Surrency, in whose house the following disturbances occurred:—

On Friday evening, a short while before dark, the family were greatly alarmed by sticks of wood flying into the house and falling upon the floor from directions they could tell nothing about, and without any human agency they could see or find out. The wood would fall before being seen, and, what made the mystery still more mysterious, the room into which the wood was falling had all its doors and windows closed. This was in the front room.

Soon after dark they stopped falling, and were succeeded by brickbats, which fell at a short interval throughout the night in every room in the house. Mr. Surrency, his wife, two grown daughters, Mr. Roberts, a clerk, and a Baptist minister of the name of Blitch, were present, and with the exception of the minister, who got upon his horse and left, they all remained awake the whole night. Notwithstanding the windows and doors were tightly closed, and no opening left in any part of the house, these brickbats continued to fall, but, although sometimes just missing, not one struck any person.

Soon after the bricks commenced falling, bottles, vases, and glassware generally commenced jumping from their usual places, falling and breaking. So quickly would pitchers, tumblers, books, and others articles jump from their positions and dash to the floor, the eye could not follow, and broken fragments were the first things seen; except in one instance, and that was a pan of water and some books—they were seen to start.

Chairs, shoes, and clothing were tumbled about the house as if the hand of a veritable witch or unseen devil was present. But the greatest mystery and most inexplicable incident of the day was the escape of a lot of ordinary clothes-hooks from a locked bureau drawer. They also fell on the floor, the door remaining tightly closed, as usual. Nothing else of special note occurred to-day. All got quiet at half-past eight o'clock on Saturday night.

Our special reporter arrived before daybreak, and heard the story of Mr. Surrency as above stated. So soon as he got through with it he stepped up to the old family clock, and was about relating how rapidly the hands had travelled around the dial when the ghosts were about on the previous day. All eyes were turned to it, and much to their astonishment the hands commenced running around at the rate of about five hours a minute. It was a thirty-hour weight clock, and after seeing it run at this rate for a short while, our reporter, who is a watchmaker by profession, employed at the store of Mr. J. H. Otto, in Fourth Street, determined at least to solve this mystery, as it was directly in his line. He stopped the clock, carefully examined the machinery, and found it not only in perfect order but nothing unusual inside or out. He could not for the life of him see the slightest thing wrong about it.

Nothing else unusual occurred until seventeen minutes before twelve o'clock,

when the performances re-opened by a pair of scissors jumping from the table to the floor. At that time Mr. Lindenstruth was sitting in a chair, when, without the slightest premonition, a large brickbat fell with great force right beside him, breaking in two. He immediately picked up a piece of it and handed it to Mason, and both found it hot. Then taking up the other piece he tried two or three times to break it by throwing it on the floor, but he failed. He then laid his second half on the sill of a window in the room, intending to bring it home. Resuming his seat near the front stoop, he was again startled by the piece he had placed on the window falling at his feet, and once more breaking in two pieces. He did not pick it up again.

It is also stated that no cause could be discovered to account for these very unusual occurrences.

THE NEWSTEAD GHOST.

We read in Moore's *Life of Byron*,—"It was, if I mistake not, during his recent visit to Newstead, in 1814, that he himself (Lord B.) actually fancied he saw the ghost of the Black Friar, which was supposed to have haunted the Abbey from the time of the dissolution of the monastery; and which he describes, from the recollection, perhaps, of his own fancy, in 'Don Juan,' " as follows, thus:—

It was no mouse—but lo! a Monk, arrayed
In cowl and beads and dusky garb appear'd;
Now in the moonlight, and now laps'd in shade,
With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard;
His garments only a slight murmur made,
He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
But slowly: and as he pass'd Don Juan by,
Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright eye!

It is stated by Mr. M. that a Miss Fanny Parkyns (a cousin of Lord B.), saw this alleged ghost, and that she made a sketch of its appearance. It would now be an interesting relic.

A STRANGE STORY.

A dream story we quoted recently from the *Banffshire Journal* has had a singular counterpart at the other side of the world. The dreamer in this case was a Chinese schoolboy at Shanghai, who told his schoolmaster that he had dreamed his stepmother murdered him, and hid his remains in a jar under the floor of her house. The schoolmaster reassured his pupil at the moment, but subsequently, missing him for two days from school, remembered the dream, and rushed to the house of his stepmother to inquire for the boy. Receiving an unsatisfactory answer, and full of suspicion of foul play, the man tore up the floor of the room and found the corpse of his pupil cut up and stowed away in a jar precisely as the poor boy had described. The case has been authenticated before the Chinese Courts, and the murderess executed, after being carried to the six gates of the city to receive the execrations of the people. All that can be surmised as a rational

explanation of this tale is that the lad had reason to fear and suspect his stepmother's intentions, and so dreamed of the very act she was already contemplating. It is also possible that in China the hiding a corpse in a large porcelain vase—which would prevent the escape of the odours of decomposition—and its concealment under the floor, may be a not uncommon practice in cases of murder.—*Echo*.

Notices of Books.

THE DESTINY OF MAN.*

THE author prefaces these poems with the remark that "of the few who inquire from whence they came, fewer still may recognise the hidden spring from which they emanate, and whose motive power, with unseen influence, still bears them along in the crowded current of literature, to be drifted hither and thither, until, like music on the waters, their melody touches in some heart a chord in tune to receive it."†

The first poem, which gives its title to the volume, and forms more than one-third of it, is in blank verse. The treatment of this grand theme is somewhat conventional, but it is pervaded by religious feeling and the recognition of present inspiration and angelic ministry. Of the minor poems we select the following, not as the best, but as short, and appropriate to the season.

THE GLAD YOUNG YEAR.

THE glad young year was early
 Drest in fair blossoms gay;
 The snowdrop and the primrose
 Adorn her spring-tide way.
 In sunny radiance blushing,
 Fresh to the world came she,
 And birds trilled forth a welcome,
 From many an evergreen tree;
 Her maiden charms half shaded
 Beneath her snowy veil,
 Like an Alpine sunset gleaming,
 Though twilight clouds the dale.
 And many a happy promise
 Of earthly joy brings she,
 Which, like that sunset fading,
 Revealed above will be.

* *The Destiny of Man, the Storm King, and other Poems.* By FREDERICK GRIFFIN. London: TRUBNER & Co.

† In the advertisement of this volume it is stated to be "written by *Planchette*."

Correspondence.

THE LATE MR. HORACE GREELEY.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I have the November number of your Magazine and write to correct an error in it.

You publish an article showing that Horace Greeley is a Spiritualist. That is not so. Had he been, his vote would have been very different from the low figure the result has shown.

The truth is that Mr. Greeley did at one time investigate and found matters that he could not account for on any hypothesis but the spiritual, as he himself said. But he had not the manliness to speak out, and when people spoke of or to him as being a Spiritualist, he took pains to contradict it, and so deported himself in regard to it as to excite in the minds of Spiritualists generally a decided feeling of hostility to him.

I write this to you, because when the result comes to be known on your side of the water, his most sorry defeat may be cited as evidence of a dislike to our cause among our people at large. That would be unjust, for I can say that I do not know of a Spiritualist that voted for him. Doubtless there were some among our millions of believers, but *I* have never heard of any.

Yours, &c.,

J. W. EDMONDS.

New York, Nov. 15th, 1872.

PANGENESIS.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I find so few persons acquainted with Mr. Darwin's theory of Pangenesis, that I am sure that a few words upon so deeply interesting a matter will not be unacceptable to many Spiritualists, and I cannot do better than quote a few lines from Professor Tyndall's essay on the "Scientific Use of the Imagination." He says that "in more senses than one Mr. Darwin has drawn heavily upon the scientific tolerance of his age. He has drawn heavily upon *time* in his development of species, and he has drawn adventurously upon *matter* in his theory of Pangenesis. According to his theory, a germ already microscopic is a world of minor germs. Not only is the organism as a whole wrapped up in the germ, but every organ of the organism has there its special seed. This, I say, is an adventurous draft on the power of matter to divide itself and distribute its forces." In other words the germ is an assembly of representatives from all the various organs of the individual form. The theory is purely

materialistic, but as we cannot conceive the nature of any laws under which such an extraordinary result might occur we are very much where we were in respect to the mystery of generation. And I am not aware that Spiritualism can afford any clearer and more satisfactory light upon the subject, because to suppose that each germ also is in possession of the germ of spirit seems only to add to the difficulty in regard to the source of these spirit germs, and as to how they have obtained "wrapped up" in themselves in some latent way the whole organism, the entire formation of any special organism, with all its peculiarities we may be contemplating. The idea, I think, must be held to be equally "adventurous," if not doubly so. My own theory is mesmeric, of a part containing the character of the whole, as by a contagion, just as each new particle in the constant replenishing of the body immediately becomes leavened with the character of the part or organ by which it is imbibed—and in which we have an indisputable fact to start with. Then we have the suggestive facts connected with contagious diseases. The influence the mother impresses on the formation of the child, and which may possibly often account for children not resembling either parent, or so often resembling the mother rather than the father, and beyond which the mesmeric fact under the requisite conditions of sympathy, &c., of casting your thoughts into another person, and in a great measure you are enabled to invest them with your own notion of condition and sensibilities.

But independently of all this, we find that parts do contain the elements of the whole, as in a small piece of the bignonia leaf developing into the complete plant. And surely neither Mr. Darwin's hypothesis of Pangenesis nor any spiritual hypothesis can apply here; nor do I know that any has been advanced. Or, again, when a sprout comes out from the smooth side of a tree, generated from the rising sap, without either seed or leaf to commence from, and in every instance the special character of the tree is maintained in all its integrity—and we know how certain animals of the lowest type will develop from parts or cuttings as well as plants—and on all which I conclude that we have two principles in operation. The principle of contagion or animal magnetism, by which the germ is invested with the entire nature of the animal, and which seems to apply chiefly to the higher order of animals; and, secondly, we have the fact that parts do in themselves contain, in some inconceivable elementary way, the nature and ability of developing the complete form; and if this is incomprehensible, at any rate we are dealing with observed facts,—and in truth, fundamentally all natural action is equally mysterious, whether as development mind, instinct and mere motion, and the thought of which might well check the presumption of speculation, and the *unscientific* use of the imagination, and in which men are too apt to take words for things, and ideas for realities. As to Mr. Darwin's theory of natural selection, it has not one single positive fact in its support, it rests on similitude illustrating a general law of development, but certainly not otherwise implying a same origin; and as the facts stand at present, they point to a rapid and full development rather than to any slow and gradual process—and to nature rapid development is as "easy" as slow—as we observe in certain animal and vegetable productions, as well as in crystallization, as, for instance, in regard to the remarkable fern-like figures on the frosted window and the like, by Bacon termed magical instances. The common mushroom developed in a night is a familiar case, and a variety of wonders in respect to certain rapid insect transformations. But as regards origin or primal conditions, and what gave the first start in regard to organic forms we at present know nothing, any more than we know why a drop of water by the action of cold should rush headlong but by an unerring law into those beautiful forms. I am not sure that we know very precisely the cause of a whirlwind occurring suddenly in calm weather. But no doubt in any case could we observe the cause and reason we should also clearly see that it could not be otherwise, and so with all else as regards natural action and development.

H. G. ATKINSON.